

Adult Social Services: Protective Services

Do you have concerns about a disabled adult who is either living in the community or in a licensed facility?

Did you know that there is a law that was enacted in 1975 to protect disabled adults from abuse, neglect and exploitation?

Please read on to understand the NC State statute and Department of Social Services responsibility.

Protection of the Abused, Neglected or Exploited Disabled Adult Act is located under NC Statute 108A Article 6.

This statute was initiated to protect the increasing number of disabled adults in North Carolina who are being abused, neglected or exploited.

The statute requires that anyone having reason to believe that a disabled person is in need of protective service shall report such information to the Director of the Department of Social Services.

In Montgomery County you may call (910) 576-6531 between the hours of 8:00am and 5:00pm Monday through Friday. In the event of an emergency after 5:00 weekdays and throughout weekends and holidays you may call 911. You may also make the report in writing. You may remain anonymous, but we encourage you to give us your name in the event additional information is needed. We are prohibited by the statute to give the reporter's name. A Social Worker is available during the above hours to take the information you provide.

The Social Worker will ask numerous questions of you such as but not limited to adult's name, address, age/date of birth, Social Security number, family/collateral names, how is the person disabled, what are the allegations of abuse, neglect or exploitation. The questions asked are important to assure that all appropriate services are made available to the adult.

To accept the referral for Protective Services the information provided must state:

- The adult is physically or mentally incapacitated.
- The adult is being abused, neglected or exploited. If abused, the abuse must be by a caretaker.
- The adult is in need of protection.

This specific criterion is important because Protective Services unlike other services provided by Social Services is initiated without the consent of the adult.

Once a referral is taken for Protective Services, a Social Worker will be assigned the case. They have up to 72 hours to respond to the case, depending on the seriousness of the situation. A DSS Social Worker is responsible for assessment of the situation and determining the need for protection.

The assessment includes evaluating six areas:

- Physical health
- Mental Health
- Social Support
- Activities of daily living and instrumental activities of daily living
- Financial Support; and
- Physical environment

During the course of the evaluation the Social Worker will talk with the adult, collaterals, and use whatever resources necessary to determine whether the adult is in need of protection.

It is important to note that at the end of the assessment the most basic tenet of Adult Protective Service is the right to self-determination.

- This means that as long as the adult can recognize the consequences of decisions they have made about their lives, their right to make those decisions must be respected.
- If the adult is unable to recognize the consequences of his decisions due to mental illness, mental retardation, Alzheimer's, dementia or other cognitive limitation and there is no other responsible party to protect the Adult the Agency is responsible for providing that Protection.

PLEASE, IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT A DISABLED PERSON PLEASE CALL (910) 576-6531 AND MAKE A REPORT.

Adult Protective Services Include:

- Initial contact within 24 to 72 hours
- Private Interview with Adult
- Assessment of all functional areas of the adults life
- Collateral contacts
- Decision of need
- A Protective Plan if required
- Referral to Appropriate Services

Adult Social Services: Representative Payee

Our agency serves as Representative Payee for the Social Security and SSI benefits of persons who are unable to manage their resources and have no one else willing or capable to assist them. Social Security and the individual's doctor determine if that individual is not able to manage their finances. If our agency is named as payee for an individual, a Social Worker is assigned to the individual as case manager to provide the following services.

Representative Payee Services include:

- Case management/assessment
- Quarterly contacts
- First priority is to ensure that the individuals day to day needs are met for food and shelter
- Arrangement of payment for existing bills
- Remaining amount can be saved or given to individual for personal items
- File a Representative Payee Report with Social Security about how the benefits were used for the previous year.

Adult Social Services: Services for the Blind

Services to the Blind provide assistance to eligible blind and/or visually impaired persons. This program is administered by the Montgomery County Department of Social Services through contract with the [North Carolina DHHS - Division of Services for the Blind](#).

Services for the Blind Include: (By Appointment Only)

Medical Eye Care and Independent Living Skills. The Medical Eye Care Program offers financial assistance for eye care (eye exams, glasses, medications and surgery) based on clients' medical needs and income.

Independent Living Skills provides an in-home assessment of client's needs related to visual impairments and legal blindness. Services include rehabilitation, mobility training, vocation assessments, referrals to community resources and family/individual adjustment counseling/education. Eligibility is based on review of a physician's eye report.